

REMARKS

In the originally filed patent application, claims 1-14 were presented for examination. In the Office Action of October 1, 2003, claims 1-14 were restricted as follows: group I (claims 1-6); group II (claim 8-10); and group III (claims 11-14). Applicants presumed that claim 7, which depends from claim 6 was included in group I. Applicants also presumed that claim 13 which depends from claim 1 was included in group I.

In response to the restriction requirement, Applicants submitted a Response to Restriction Requirement on November 24, 2003 and elected with traverse group II, which corresponds to claims 8-10. In addition, Applicants submitted new claims 15-26, which are intended to read of the subject matter of the elected group namely, group II.

In the present preliminary amendment, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 6, 8, and 11 to more clearly claim the invention. In particular, each of claims 1, 6, 8, and 11 were amended to indicate that an inductive heater pre-cures an adhesive in an end cap to bond the end cap to a filter element. Support for these amendments can be found on page 25, lines 5-19. Thus, Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

If the restriction requirement is maintained Applicants request and authorize the canceling of claims 1-7 and 11-14, corresponding to groups I and III.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, he is invited to call the telephone number below for an interview.

If there are any charges due with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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